# Whitehorse Liquor Store Survey 2012

This report was produced by the Yukon Government's Bureau of Statistics, which is a branch of the Government's Executive Council office. The Bureau was working for the Yukon Liquor Corporation which commissioned this report.

Please note, permission is granted to use the contents of this publication provided acknowledgement is given to:

Yukon Liquor Corporation
Yukon Government

For further information about the Whitehorse Liquor Store Survey contact:

Yukon Liquor Corporation
Phone: (867) 667-5245
Email: Yukon.Liquor@gov.yk.ca

For further information about the activities or publications of the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, contact:

Government of Yukon
Executive Council Office
Bureau of Statistics (A-8C)
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

Phone: (867) 667-5640 (or callers outside Whitehorse but within Yukon call 1-800-661-0408 ext. 5640)
Fax: (867) 393-6203
Email: ybsinfo@gov.yk.ca
Website: www.eco.gov.yk.ca/stats

Printed October 2012

# CONTENTS

Introduction ..... 3
Methodology ..... 3
Executive Summary ..... 4
Store Exterior ..... 6
Customer Service ..... 7
Store Interior ..... 9
Products ..... 10
Website ..... 14
Additional Comments ..... 14
Profile of Respondents ..... 15

## Introduction

To continue to improve service to customers, Yukon Liquor Corporation contracted the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to conduct a customer satisfaction survey in 2012. This was a repeat of its 2006 and 2009 Whitehorse Liquor Store Surveys.

The 2012 survey, which asked customers to rate the facility, products, and staff of the Whitehorse Liquor Store, used questions similar to those in the 2006 and 2009 surveys. This allows the results to be compared, and changes over time to be tracked.

## Methodology

The 2012 Whitehorse Liquor Store Survey was carried out from August 9 to 16. The interviews were conducted at the Whitehorse Liquor Store by Yukon Bureau of Statistics employees, with a convenience sample of liquor store customers. Customers who agreed to take part in the survey were offered a Check 25-themed flash drive as a thank-you for their participation.

520 customers participated in the survey, 210 refused, and 19 were ineligible. Of those who did not participate, the majority cited "lack of time". The refusal rate and the reasons for refusal are consistent with the 2009 survey.

Yukon Bureau of Statistics provided complete impartiality in the analysis of survey results, as well as ensuring the confidentiality of individual responses. Data were analyzed in SAS and open-ended responses were coded into thematic categories.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Store Exterior

Seventy-one percent of customers rated the overall cleanliness of the store exterior as good or excellent. This is an increase over both 2009 and 2006.

While still a problem for many customers, positive ratings of the store's parking have also increased over the past six years – the good or excellent responses now stand at 63%. Concerns with the parking area included: dislike of people loitering outside, feeling threatened or harassed, and safety concerns with the traffic.

### Customer Service

The customers who shop at the Whitehorse Liquor Store overwhelmingly rated the customer service as good or excellent (92%).

Liquor store staff offered to assist 62% of respondents; this figure is down slightly from 2009 (66%). However, almost all customers who wanted staff to help them did have staff offer to assist (90%), and the help they received was what they were looking for (98%).

Two questions on the survey this year dealt with Yukon Liquor Corporation's 'Check 25' advertising campaign. While just under half of all respondents knew that liquor store employees were to check ID if the customer appeared to be under 25 years old, this was true for 74% of those who had heard of the Check 25 program. However, only one-third of shoppers had heard of the program.

### Store Interior

A high percentage of customers rated the store's inside (88%), layout (91%) and cleanliness (90%) as good or excellent. These percentages have climbed from both 2009 and 2006.

The percentage of customers who were able to find what they were looking for has also climbed since 2006 (84%) and 2009 (93%) to 96% in 2012.

One in ten survey respondents had a comment about the interior of the store; these comments included specific suggestions for improvement, general negative comments, and suggestions to increase the size of the store.

### Products

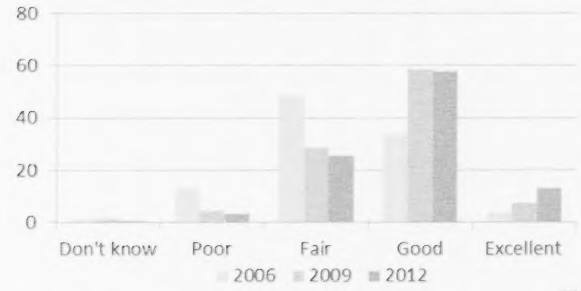
Up from 2006 and 2009, 79% of the 2012 customers felt the range of products carried by the Whitehorse Liquor Store was good or excellent. Eighty-one percent said the store carries the products they want 'most of the time' or 'always'. However, almost half of the customers also said they would like the Whitehorse Liquor Store to carry other products (mainly better selections of beers, wines, and spirits).

## Website

Only 23% of customers know about the Yukon Liquor Corporation's website; however, this is an improvement from 2009 (16%) and 2006 (10%). Of those who knew about it and visited the website, one in three used it for product information, pricing, and availability.

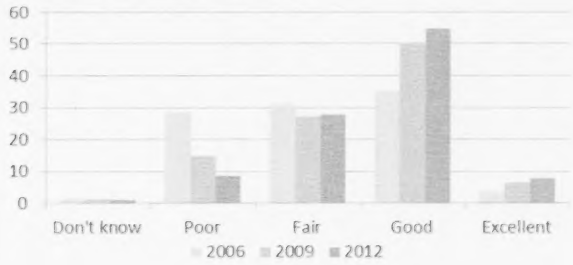
## STORE EXTERIOR

**Fig 1 Overall cleanliness of store exterior (%)**




In 2012 most Liquor Store customers (71%) rated the overall cleanliness of the store exterior as good (58%) or excellent (13%). This is an increase of 5 percentage points from 2009, and is an increase of 34 percentage points from 2006.

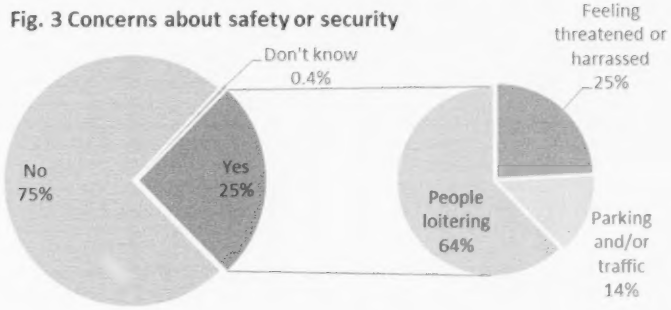
**Fig 2 Rating of store parking (%)**




Ratings of the store's parking has also increased over the past six years; each year has seen an increase in the percent of respondents answering 'excellent' or 'good' when rating parking. 2012 'excellent' ratings stood at 8% while 55% of respondents rated it as good.

The majority of customers (75%) said they didn't have any concerns about their safety or security when coming to the liquor store. Of those 25% who did have concerns, 64% mentioned people loitering outside the store; 25% talked about feeling threatened or harassed outside the store, and 14% had concerns about parking and/or traffic safety.

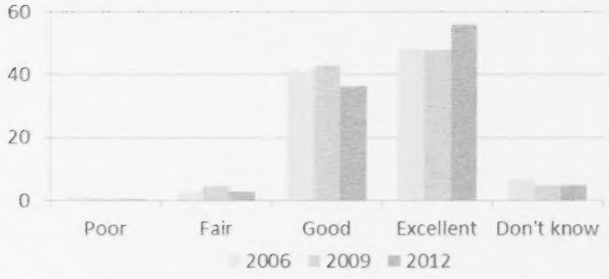
**Fig. 3 Concerns about safety or security**




Customers were given a chance to make general comments about the exterior of the store. 18% of respondents chose to do so. Their comments centered on people loitering (64%), feeling threatened or harassed (25%) and parking and/or traffic in the parking lot (14%).

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

**Fig 4 Percent responding customer service received at store was...**

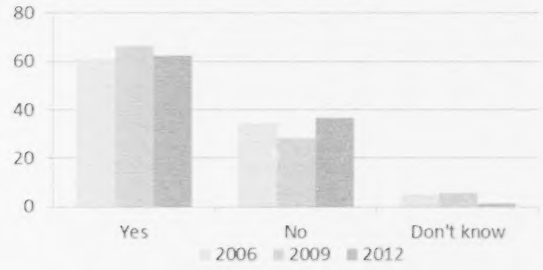



In 2012 92% of customers rated the customer service at the store as 'good' or excellent'. This is two percentage points higher than both 2009 and 2006 figures, but the percentage of those who rated the service as 'excellent' rose eight percentage points between 2009 and 2012.

On the other end, those who answered 'fair' or 'poor' totalled 3% of the customers, which is the lowest percentage of any of the three years. (2009 was 5% and 2006 was 4%).

Liquor Store staff offered to assist 62% of respondents; of those who were assisted, 98% found the assistance to be helpful. This percentage is very close to the figure from 2009.

**Fig 5 Did staff offer to assist you? (%)**




Not all shoppers required assistance, however; 43% of customers responded that they were not interested in assistance from the staff.

**Fig 6 Did you want the staff to help you? (%)**

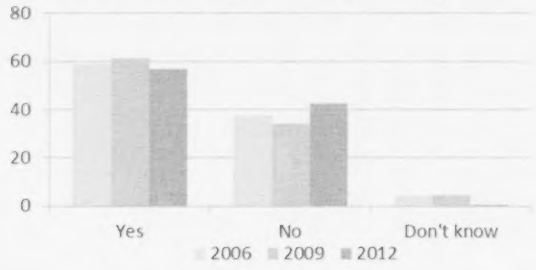
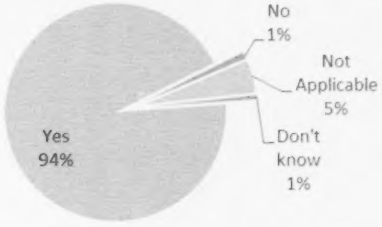



**Fig 7 Was the staff friendly and courteous?**



Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that their purchases were processed quickly and efficiently at the till. 'Not applicable' responses were likely from first-time customers who had not yet gone through the till.

In the spring of 2012 Yukon Liquor Corporation implemented a policy of checking the ID of anyone who appeared to be under the age of 25 and ran an awareness campaign around the policy. The 2012 survey had two questions included regarding this policy and campaign.

**Fig 8 Are your purchases usually processed quickly and efficiently at the till?**

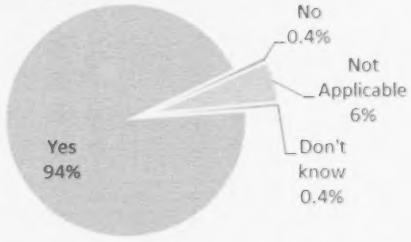



**Fig 9 Liquor Store Employees must check ID if customer appears to be:**

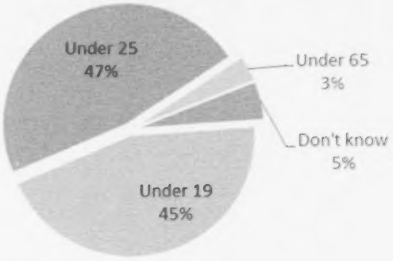
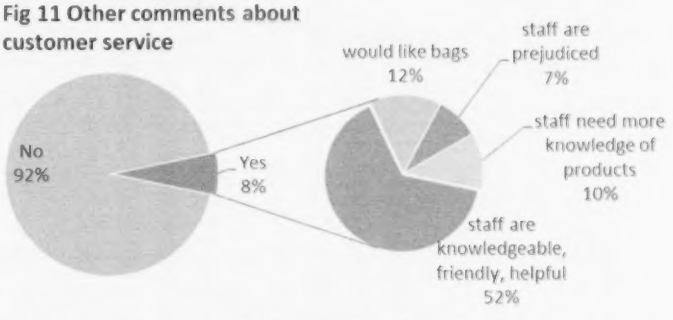



**Fig 10 Have you heard of YLC's Check 25 program?**

While just under half of all respondents responded that Liquor Store employees were to check ID if the customer appeared to be under 25, this was true of 74% of those who had heard of the Check 25 program.

Of the three age groups we looked at (under 30, 30-55, and 55+), customers judged by interviewers to be under age 30 were the most likely to have heard of the Check 25 program (57%).

**Fig 11 Other comments about customer service**




Eight percent of the respondents wanted to make a further comment about the customer service received – of that 8%, 52% had positive things to say about the staff's knowledge, friendliness, etc. Another 29% of comments were negative, and dealt with topics such as the lack of provision of shopping bags (12%) and lack of knowledge around products (10%). Three respondents had comments about the staff being prejudiced.

## STORE INTERIOR

Approximately 90% of customers gave the Whitehorse store's inside, layout and cleanliness either a 'good' or an 'excellent' rating. This percentage is up around five percentage points from 2009 (only inside (67%) and layout (74%) were rated in 2006).

The percentage of those who were able to easily find products they were looking for has climbed from 84% in 2006 to 93% in 2009 to 96% in 2012.

**Fig 12 Rate the interior of the store (%)**

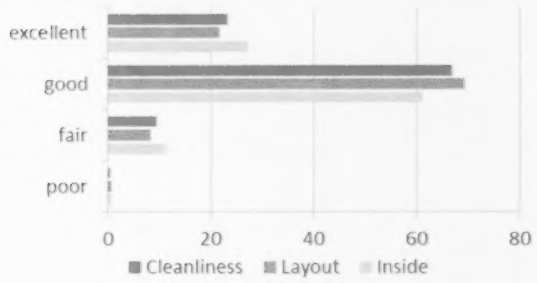
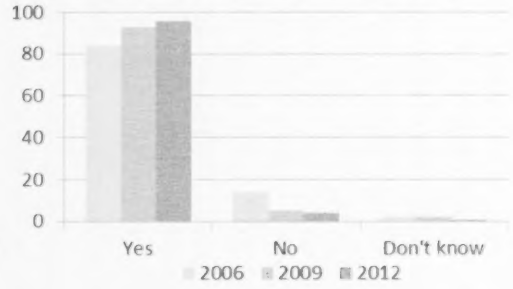



**Fig 13 Can you easily find products? (%)**




10% of customers surveyed had comments about the interior of the store. These 53 comments can be categorized as follows:

- 17% - general negative comments (e.g. 'it's dusty' and 'it's not very attractive')
- 17% - specific suggestions for improvement (e.g. 'more product posters' and 'need rack at checkout')
- 13% - increase size of store
- 11% - suggestions for specific product areas (e.g. 'store wine-bottles sideways')
- 9% - building is old and needs updating
- 9% - general positive comments
- 8% - need walk-in coolers
- 8% - need better lighting
- 8% - need cold cases of beer

## PRODUCTS

**Fig 14 Opinion of range of products**

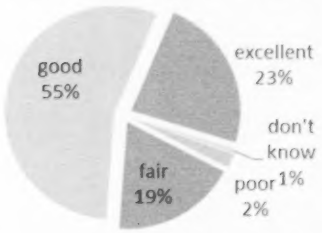
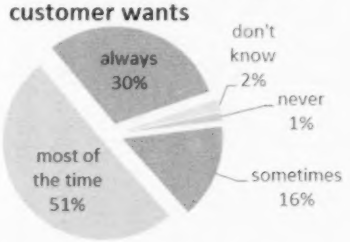



**Fig 15 Store carries product customer wants**




Seventy-nine percent of customers said the range of products the Liquor Store carries is 'good' or 'excellent'. This percentage is up from 74% in 2006 and 76% in 2009. Customers were also asked if the store carries the products they want. Eighty-one percent of respondents said 'most of the time' or 'always' to this; this figure is up from about 78% in 2006 and 2009.

Customers were then asked what options the staff offered them when the product they were looking for was out of stock. This hadn't happened, or wasn't applicable, to 67% of the respondents. Of the 157 respondents who had been in this situation, they were most likely to have been told about an alternate product (55%), or let know when new stock would be in (50%). Twelve percent said staff didn't offer them any options. (Customers could choose more than one option on this question.)

The survey respondents were asked if the store doesn't normally carry the product desired, does the staff explain the Special Order Service to them. This situation hadn't happened to a large percent of respondents (45% not applicable). For the remaining 271 respondents, 68% had the special order service explained to them, and 32% had not.

**Fig 16 Should the store carry other products?**

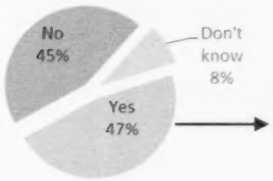
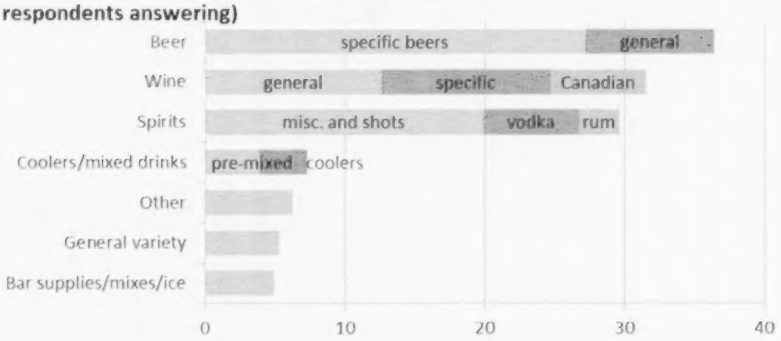



**Fig 17 What other products should the store carry? (% of respondents answering)**




Just under half of the customers surveyed indicated they would like the liquor store to carry different products than are currently available at the store. Two-hundred and six customers provided feedback on the products they felt should be carried; and many answered with multiple items.

- 36% of customers wanted a better selection of beer, and many named specific types and brands they would like to see carried at the store.
- 32% of respondents mentioned wine – 40% of these said they wanted a better selection, and 38% mentioned specific non-Canadian regions or types of wine. The remaining 22% percent requested a better selection of Canadian or BC wines.
- 30% of respondents wanted a better selection of spirits. Of these, 23% mentioned vodka; 10% mentioned rum.
- The six percent that constitutes the 'other' category includes comments such as 'more Texas mickeys', 'more Canadian products', and 'less expensive products'.
- Around four percent wanted more pre-mixed drinks to be available, and another three percent were looking for a wider variety of coolers.
- Five percent wanted 'more variety' and 'more selection of everything'.
- Another five percent would like to see bar supplies, mixes and ice sold at the liquor store.

Fig 18 Do you know in advance what you are going to buy?

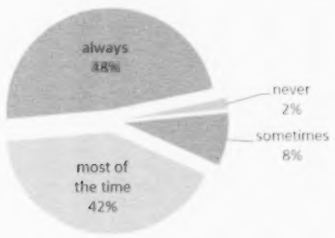
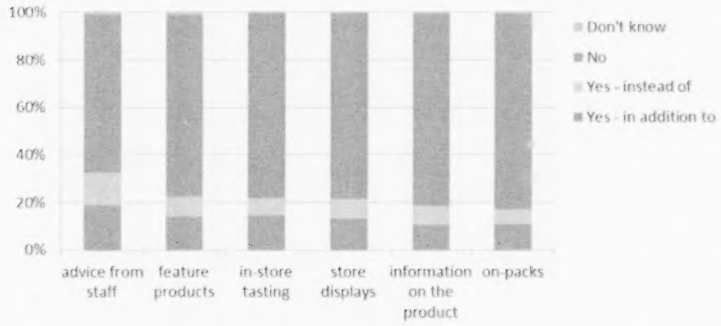



Fig 19 Influences on purchase - and will customer buy in addition to or instead of regular purchase




While customers 'always' (48%) or 'most of the time' (42%) know what they are going to buy before they visit the Liquor Store, the Liquor Store was interested in understanding what, if any, influence specific promotions the store runs have on customers' buying decisions.

The following things were likely to influence purchase choices (customers could choose more than one option):

- Advice from staff (33%)
- Feature products (23%)
- In-store tasting (22%)
- Store displays (22%)
- Information on the product (19%)
- On-packs (17%)

If customers were indeed influenced by the above list, they were asked if they were likely to buy a product instead of or in addition to their regular purchase. For every instance, more customers chose 'in addition to' than 'instead of'.

Other things that influenced purchasing were:

- Familiar products (36%)
- Seasonal occasions (36%)
- Trying products elsewhere (35%)
- TV, radio, magazines (10%)
- Local newspapers (5%)

Common answers in the 'Other' category included 'word of mouth', 'local products', and 'pricing'.

**Fig 20 Percent of respondents who would like additional information on...**

Liquor Store customers indicated they would like to have additional information on: nothing else (34%), new store products (27%), pairing suggestions (22%), organic products (19%), fair-trade products (19%), and drink recipes (18%).

## WEBSITE

**Fig 21 Do you know about the website? (%)**

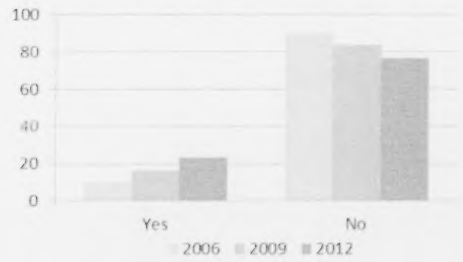
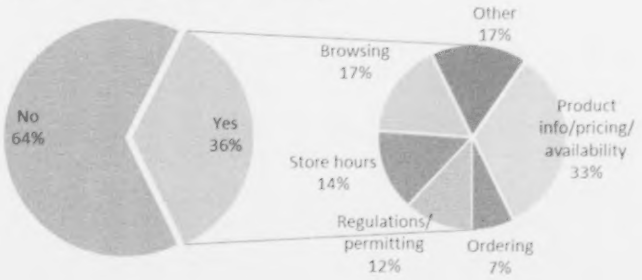



**Fig 22 Do you visit the website? For what purpose? (% of those aware of the website)**




Only 23% of respondents were aware of the Yukon Liquor Store website. This figure, while low, has increased from 10% in 2006 and 16% in 2009.

Those who were aware of the website were asked if they visited it, and if so, why. 36% of those who were aware of the site did indeed visit it, and for a variety of reasons (see fig 22).

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

183 survey respondents revealed what, other than lower prices, would make shopping at the Liquor Store more enjoyable. They answered as follows (more than one answer was possible):

- 20% - More variety, better selection
- 13% - Miscellaneous (better music, build a drive-in, provide bags)
- 11% - Address issue of people loitering in parking lot
- 9% - Free samples/tastings
- 9% - Modernize the building, expand the premises
- 9% - Longer/better hours
- 7% - Larger variety of cold products
- 6% - Special offers/promotions
- 5% - Better parking
- 5% - Sell non-alcohol products (pop, mixes, ice)
- 4% - Information on product (pairing, recipes)
- 4% - Nothing

37 respondents had final comments for the interviewers. There was a wide variety of things mentioned, including general praise, criticism of the parking area, suggestions to build a new store, requests for lower prices, and suggestions to privatize the store.

## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

**Fig 23 Do you live in Yukon?**

**Fig 24 Where do you normally buy liquor?**

Eighty-seven percent of the survey respondents were Yukon residents, while 13% were not.

Yukon residents were then asked where they normally bought their liquor; 96% responded that they came to the Whitehorse Liquor Store; one percent said off-sales, and three percent gave other answers, mainly liquor stores in communities outside Whitehorse.

**Fig 25 How often do you visit the store?**

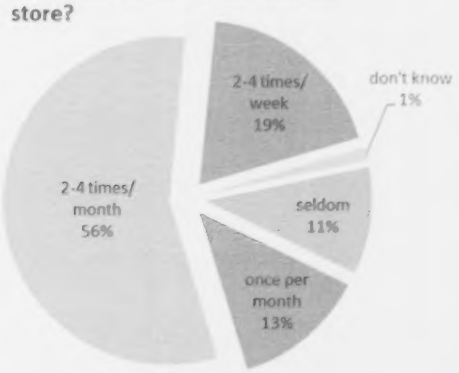



**Fig 26 How much do you normally spend?**

Most (56%) of respondents visit the liquor store two to four times per month. Another 19% visit two to four times per week. The rest visit once per month (13%), seldom (11%) or didn't know (1%).

A very small percentage of patrons (2%) spent twenty dollars or less on an average visit to the liquor store. The remaining 98% were divided between $21-$40 (30%), $41-$60 (26%), $61-$80 (16%), and $80+ (24%).

Males were more likely to spend more than $80 on a regular visit (27%) than females (21%). They were also more likely to visit the store more than two times per month (82%) than female customers (67%).

54% of all respondents were male; 46% were female. Twenty percent were age 30 or less, 47% were between 30 and 55, and 33% were 55 or over. (Customers' ages were estimated by the interviewers.)